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The Exposure
of the
Manchester, 1834

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THE EXPOSURE;

A REPLY TO

“AN ADDRESS

TO THE

WESLEYAN METHODIST MISSIONARY

SOCIETIES,

BY A WESLEYAN METHODIST LOCAL PREACHER.”

BY A LAYMAN.

“He that is first in his own cause *seemeth* just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.” *Prov.* 18 c. 17 v.

“How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate KNOWLEDGE?” *Prov.* 1 c. 22 v.

MANCHESTER:

LOVE AND BARTON, NEWALL'S BUILDINGS, MARKET-STREET,
AND SOLD BY C. AMBERY, AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1834.

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LOVE AND BARTON, PRINTERS, MANCHESTER.

Wes. 1506

THE EXPOSURE, &c.

THE spirit of blind opposition which, for some time past, has been manifested in this neighbourhood, to the contemplated establishment of the Wesleyan Theological Institution, has never assumed so malignant and infuriate an aspect, as that which is displayed in the otherwise insignificant pamphlet now before us. Some days previous to its publication, the walls of the town were placarded with *flaming* bills, announcing its speedy appearance. The opponents of the Institution laid great stress upon this expected production of one of their ablest champions. We were, therefore, anticipating that the *gigantic mental strength* of the party would be developed in this "Address;" that arguments more powerful, and reasons more cogent, than any which they had hitherto advanced, would be stated; that new and *stronger* light would be thrown upon "the dangerous character of the Institution," and upon "the ambitious motives" of its promoters; and that the positions which the writers favourable to the Seminary had taken, to prove its necessity, would be successfully assailed by this *formidable* polemic; but, alas! we had raised our expectations too high, and on its issuing from the press, we found it was a *shadow* without a *substance*, frothy declamation destitute of sound reason, malignant vituperation, unsupported by truth and fact, and that the judgment of its author, if he ever possessed any,—had been unheeded amidst the storm of passion which raged in and agitated his bosom.

The whole affair seems to furnish a striking parallel to the fable of Phædrus,

"Mons parturiebat gemitus immanes ciens,
Eratque in terris maxima expectatio;
At ille murem peperit."*

* A mountain was labouring, heaving prodigious groans; and there was in the lands the greatest expectation; but that mountain brought forth a *mouse*.

The Writer of this Voluminous Pamphlet, of five and a half pages, appears

We should not have condescended to enter the arena of controversy with an individual who appears to have so little regard to truth, and whose pamphlet is destitute of that courtesy which even in polemical writings one *gentleman* extends to another; and we should have allowed the anonymous slanderer to rail on unanswered; but as we were afraid lest any well-meaning and pious contributors to the Mission Fund should be misled by his statements, we thought it due to the Society with which we are connected, to make a few remarks upon this tissue of falsehood and exaggeration.

In the commencement of his "Address" he states, that it is generally known that the Conference held in Manchester last year, appointed a Committee "to arrange a plan for the better education of our Junior Preachers," &c. &c. And here permit me to express my surprise that he who believed the "scheme" to be so ruinous to our Connexion, so prejudicial to the interests of our "Heaven-born system," could, for the space of a whole year, until the plan was finally adopted, and the Institution "actually" established, remain a silent and apparently unconcerned spectator.

In the next sentence he exclaims "against this unconstitutional and daring measure we deem it our indispensable and Methodist duty to protest." With due submission we think it would have *appeared* more regular if he had *proved it unconstitutional*, before he pronounced it so. Against such hasty prejudication we deem it *our* Methodist duty to protest. Next follow his "weighty reasons," which are, First,—Because such an Institution is directly opposed to the will and wish of our venerable Founder, who, according to the statement of the Rev. H. Moore, his coadjutor and biographer, strenuously opposed it to the latest period of his life." His ground for this sweeping statement is *the mere assertion* of the Rev. H. Moore, in opposition to the *written* testimony of the Min. of Conference for 1744—45, in opposition also to the principles held by, and the uniform conduct of Mr. Wesley, who ever manifested a laudable anxiety for the intellectual improvement of his Preachers. His advancement of this as one of his "*reasons*" after the refutation which

to have been so well satisfied with the excellency of his production, and so thoroughly convinced of the perpetuity of interest it would excite, that being afraid lest *Pirated Editions* of it might be printed, and the profits arising from its sale be thus diverted into some channel running in an opposite direction to his pocket, has taken the precaution of "Entering it at Stationers' Hall," and has secured the Copyright for *twenty-eight years*!!

has been so publicly and irrefragably made, by the Rev. J. Crowther, is an additional proof that his opposition is most dishonourable and unjustifiable. His second ground of hostility is as destitute of sound reason as the former. That it is opposed to the wishes of *some* of our congregations, is true: but that this is the case *generally* remains to be proved. We require *proof*, not impudent assertion! It is, however, more than probable, that had it not been for the contumacious "opposition," and glaring misrepresentation of a *few* from whom we expected better things, on the one hand; and from the want of correct information as to the designs of the Institution and the reasons for its adoption, on the other, this state of things would never have occurred. Our author's third reason is—"Because such an Institution is perfectly unnecessary, inasmuch as all candidates for the Christian Ministry among us are men who share in the improvements of society, and whose general attainments are therefore proportioned to the growing intelligence of our societies and congregations." His argument runs thus: The intelligence of our societies and congregations is growing. Society is improving; *all* candidates for the Christian Ministry among us share in its improvement: Therefore, "their attainments are proportioned to the growing intelligence," &c: And therefore "such an Institution is perfectly unnecessary." Admirable logician!! As this clear and skillful reasoner is himself a Local Preacher who has passed through the "Local Preachers' and Quarterly Meetings" without being remanded as "incompetent;" we suppose this is to be considered as a specimen of their "improvement" and "general attainments." We are, however, unwilling to take any advantage of his manifest "incompetency," and shall therefore endeavour to meet the argument *intended* to be conveyed with plainness and candour.

That the two first propositions are true, we gladly admit; but the third requires some qualification. The "improvement and growing intelligence" on which so much stress is here laid, is chiefly apparent in the neighbourhood of large manufacturing towns. The reason is very obvious. In the country, especially the remote parts, no such facilities for acquiring information exist, as are to be found in towns: viz., Lectures, Libraries, Reading Societies, &c. &c. &c. In the country too, a great portion of our Members belong to the lower classes of Society, and from these no inconsiderable number of our Candidates for the Ministry are raised; and as these, on account of their narrow circumstances, are prevented from procuring the books so desirable, and even necessary at the outset of their Ministerial career, their

proficiency in those “general attainments” to which he evidently alludes, must necessarily be inconsiderable.

In connexion with what we have just advanced, take the two preceding propositions, and instead of warranting the inference so singularly drawn, they will be found to contain sufficient grounds for a directly opposite conclusion. His fourth reason is: “Because in despite of a pledge given to our Societies, in the laws of pacification, this establishment has been formed by Conference, without obtaining, through its public officers, an expression of the sentiments of the Connexion.” For the information of such of our readers as have not had an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the pledge here alluded to, and to which special reference is made in the margin, we shall take the liberty of inserting it at length.

VI.—We have determined, that all the Rules which relate to the Societies, Leaders, Stewards, Local Preachers, Trustees, and Quarterly Meetings, shall be published with the Rules of the Society, for the benefit and convenience of all the Members.

VII.—In respect to all new Rules, which shall be made by the Conference, it is determined, that if, at any time, the Conference see it necessary to make any new Rule for the Societies at large, and such Rule should be objected to at the first Quarterly Meeting in any given Circuit; and if the major part of that Meeting, in conjunction with the Preachers, be of opinion, that the enforcing of such Rule in that Circuit will be injurious to the prosperity of that Circuit; it shall not be enforced in opposition to the judgment of such Quarterly Meeting, before the second Conference. But if the Rule be confirmed by the second Conference, it shall be binding to the whole Connexion. Nevertheless, the Quarterly Meetings, rejecting a new Rule, shall not, by Publications, Public Meetings, or otherwise, make that Rule a cause of contention; but shall strive, by every means, to preserve the peace of the Connexion.

By what process of reasoning this clear-headed disputant has discovered that its regulations are “Rules for the Societies at large,” we are at a loss to conceive. So far from their being “Rules for the Societies at large,” to be *enforced* in the respective Circuits, they are not Rules for *any* Society, nor to be *enforced* in *any* Circuit. The Institution depends *entirely* on the voluntary support of those *friends* who are desirous to see our Connexion become more extensively and permanently useful, by the instrumentality of an enlightened and consequently more efficient ministry. His fifth and last reason,—if reason it can be called,—is, “That it is a serious innovation on Wesleyan Methodism; tending entirely to subvert its original constitution and design, and investing its officers, and especially its president, the Rev. Jabez Bunting, with an amount of power and authority, dangerous to the peace and prosperity of the Connexion.”

This is again begging the question, and we must reiterate our demand for *proof*. After the preceding specimens of the author's veracity, something more than *his* bare assertion is necessary to give weight to a statement involving such serious consequences. The individual so ungenerously alluded to in the latter part of this bombastical sentence, is well known to the world, and to the Connexion, of which he is so illustrious an ornament. As it would be the height of absurdity in us to say any thing on the side of merit so obvious; so his attempt to insinuate that he will use the power entrusted to him, for sinister purposes, will be regarded by all intelligent and candid persons as the mere overflowing of an *envious* heart.

However, as the charge he here makes against the Institution, is one of a serious nature, and may have a prejudicial influence on the minds of the pious and unsuspecting, we would just observe, that if he means by the word "innovation," that it is something new in Methodism, he is quite mistaken. Colleges have long been established among the Methodists in America,—that boast of raving theorists,—and who ever heard of these having subverted the original constitution of Methodism? or of the power and authority of their officers, having proved dangerous to the peace and prosperity of the Connexion? The very reverse has been the result; the Society there having increased in a much greater ratio, than in this country. He next informs us that he has laid these reasons before "his Missionary friends," in order that "they may perceive, and feel, the reasonableness, and weight, of his special appeal." And now that they perceive the entire absence of any thing like "reasonableness and weight," in this "appeal;" we trust they will "feel" a proper contempt for his vanity and presumption; and a just indignation at the "mean and unhallowed motives" that induced him to put forth sacrilegious hands, to injure a cause so holy, so exalted, so truly dear to every pious and benevolent mind.

In page 5, he says, "If this well-authenticated and uncontradicted report be correct, the friends of Missions are bound, &c." If he believes it to be "*well-authenticated* and uncontradicted," why ask if it be correct? Some suspicion evidently lies hid! some base insinuation is as evidently intended! "What," says he, "one hundred pounds per man annually, to fit him for Missionary labour, and this too, after he has been recommended as an acceptable and useful *Local Preacher*," (he appears to think this a reflection on the "attainments" of his order) "and been examined and approved by the Quarterly and District Meetings!

Monstrous and unaccountable!" *Prodigious!!!* "Nearly two pounds per week, for the board and education of single men, thus disciplined and *tutored*, and examined and approved beforehand; and this serious and wasteful amount, taken from a fund raised by voluntary subscription. This enormous expenditure from such a source, and in such a way, is shameful, if not criminal."

He ought, in justice, to have stated that this sum was only expended on those candidates, who were intended for some *peculiar* stations, or whose misfortune it was to be extremely deficient; and we confidently appeal to all persons acquainted with the expense of Board, Lodging, Education, Books, &c. whether this "amount" is either "lavish" or "wasteful." For the rest, it will be sufficient to state, that the characters of those excellent men here implicated, (the Missionary Committee) have been long before the public, and the truly enviable elevation to which their conduct and abilities have raised them, is so far above vulgar clamour and *mean insinuation*, that *his* empty ravings, like

———"The murmuring surge
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high."

In the margin of page 5, he tells us, "that Mr. President Taylor, stated at a meeting," elsewhere referred to, "that at present, our Missionary Candidates are lamentably deficient in the common rudiments of learning:—That some of them are scarcely able to write, and many are devoid of a knowledge of the Grammar of their native tongue." The qualification which accompanies the two clauses of the latter sentence, ought, in fairness, to be extended to the former. And I put it to all impartial Methodists to say, whether they see any thing at all incredible in these statements. He says, "It is just possible, *perhaps*, though highly improbable, for incompetent candidates to pass through the Local Preachers and Quarterly Meetings without detection; and he more than hints that they *cannot* escape the "sagacity and penetration" of the District Meeting, because, among other things, they are questioned as to their attainments in the arts here referred to. The question is not, however, what queries are proposed, but what are the answers returned. It is very natural the District Meeting should be desirous of ascertaining the qualifications of the Ministers, but to infer from this that, therefore, all candidates are Grammarians, Penmen, and Linguists, is an instance of gross folly and ridiculous absurdity, of which few men in full possession of their mental faculties, would

be guilty. I shall here make two or three remarks, which I trust will, in a great measure, remove the prejudices some persons have imbibed against the contemplated Institution. Similar establishments have been founded by almost every other denomination, and after their utility has been tested, by years of experience, are still supported by them, as they have eminently subserved the cause of true religion. The Independent Colleges are at present about *twelve*; the Baptist, *five*. The liberal Episcopalians have one at Newport Pagnel, the Calvinistic *Methodists*, one at Cheshunt, at Trevecka, which was founded in 1768; and the New Connexion Methodists, at their last Conference, agreed to establish one at Sheffield.

The celebrated Robert Hall, writing on a similar subject, in the year 1811, says, "There was a time, we are aware, when doubts were entertained, in some serious minds, of the eligibility of training young men for the ministry, by a preparatory course of study. These scruples, we believe, have long since subsided, and a conviction felt by intelligent men of all denominations, of the expedience, if not the necessity, of instructing Candidates for the Ministry in the principles of science and literature. Learning is no longer dreaded as the enemy of piety; nor is it supposed that the orthodoxy of a public teacher of religion derives any security from his professed ignorance on every other subject. Along with this revolution in the sentiments of a certain class of Christians, circumstances have arisen, connected with the more general diffusion of knowledge and the state of society, which renders a higher degree of mental cultivation than was heretofore needed, *indispensably necessary*." The practice of affording preparatory instruction, to Ministerial Candidates, has received the approbation and sanction of the most pious and talented, in all denominations. The majority of those who have been educated in these *Institutions*, have become "burning and shining lights" in the Church of Christ; and have been the honoured instruments of turning thousands "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." From this we may conclude that *they* have the broad seal of the Divine approval.

In the Wesleyan Institution, the "good soldiers" of our Sion will be trained, to wage interminable warfare with sin, in all its ramifications; here the physicians of souls shall learn the power and application of those moral medicines, by which "the health of the daughter of our people may be recovered;" here those who are "apt to teach" shall acquire the necessary mental furniture, and thence as the instructors of mankind, shall carry

with them, and diffuse around them, the most profitable of all wisdom ; and after having turned "many to righteousness," shall themselves "shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever."

We must, however, return to the "Address," on page 6, of which the Institution is denominated a "Daring Innovator on our Christian rights and privileges;" how a *thing* can become a *person* I cannot possibly conceive! and how the thing thus personified will infringe "our rights and privileges," remains to be explained! In the next passage it is introduced to us as a "proud Goliath, *who* has dared to defy the armies of the living God;" and as a "Monster" that must not be fed "with Missionary supplies;" and the writer represents himself as "marching" forth, *a second David*, armed with "sling and stones," to level it,—Goliath. with the earth!! In reply to this string of abusive names and ridiculous jargon, no *argument* is necessary. The brain of the Author appears to have been in a state of *Chaotic confusion*; and this may, in some measure, account for the frightful apparitions, his imagination has conjured up, and for the absurd medley of "Daring Innovators, Goliaths, Monsters, Common Enemies, &c." which fitted, in formidable array, before his disordered vision.

"Black Spirits and White,
Red Spirits and Grey."

The intense degree of vanity, which inflated him to style himself and his coadjutors, "the army of the living God," is, indeed, *pitiable!!*

"As consistent, honest-hearted Methodists, our plain duty to God, and to his Church, at this awful crisis in Methodism, is to withhold our support from this common enemy, by suspending our Missionary Efforts and Liberalities." Page 6. I envy not the man, be he who he may, who, steeping his pen in gall and wormwood, transcribed the above sentence, and thereby attempted to injure the great cause of Missions, and to retard that joyful period when "the knowledge of the glory of God shall cover the whole earth." Our past exertions, in the Missionary Work, have been demanded by *duty* to God, by *yearning pity* for the souls of men, by *sympathy* for degraded suffering humanity, by *hatred* to sin and corruption, and by *gratitude* to the Redeemer, who died to save every son of Adam. These motives ought to operate *now* as powerfully as ever they did. Duty to God as *imperatively* re-

quires our exertions in this cause, as ever it did. Myriads of the human race, still shrouded in Pagan darkness, call upon us as vehemently as ever, to send them the Light of the glorious Gospel. Can we, then, desert the Missionary standard without incurring the heaviest displeasure of our God? Can we refuse to supply, with the Bread of Life, famishing millions of our fellow men, without being pierced to the heart with their despairing cry, "No man careth for my soul?" Can we, by withholding all contributions to the Mission Fund, permit upwards of 230 inoffending Missionaries, together with their wives and children, to endure privation, penury, and want, without being *justly* stigmatized as most cruel, unjust, and inhuman? Can we, by suspending our Missionary Operations, allow those wildernesses which are now assuming an appearance of fertility and beauty; and are putting forth the lovely blossoms which indicate a luxuriant and golden harvest, to return to their native barrenness and sterility, without causing sorrow amongst the angelic hosts, and raising the loud and pealing laughter of all the fiends in hell?

We then call upon you, our Christian Friends and Brethren, to redouble your efforts in this holy and philanthropic cause. We entreat you by all the tokens of your Saviour's love and compassion, to declare yourselves "on the Lord's side," and to "come up to his help against the mighty" phalanxes of Paganism. Be not deluded by the *artful sophistry* of this *pretended* friend of Missions, who, in order to gratify his own malevolent passions, does not scruple to abandon a Society, whose object is to evangelize the whole world. "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season, ye shall reap if *ye faint not*." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Then "God, even our own God, shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him." Now "BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, WHO ONLY DOETH WONDROUS THINGS; AND BLESSED BE HIS GLORIOUS NAME FOR EVER; AND LET THE WHOLE EARTH BE FILLED WITH HIS GLORY, AMEN AND AMEN."